

CHIDING AND CHEERING

NO. 3430

A SERMON
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1914
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

“Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?”
John 14:9

THIS chapter gives us a very delightful picture of the companionship and kindly intercourse which were kept up between our Savior and His twelve disciples when He dwelt with them in this world. Though they looked up to Him as if they felt there was none upon earth beside Him, yet they were as simple and free in speaking to Him as if they merely talked to one another. And did not He behave to them like a true friend, ever mindful of their childishness, but gentle, tender, and patient withal? Warning without wounding, correcting without much censure, and comforting them without concealing the dangers to which they were exposed?

Thus we notice how they speak to Him with a natural, easy familiarity, and He talks to them in full sympathy with their weakness, teaching them little by little as they are able to learn. They ask just such questions as a boy might ask of his father. Often they show their ignorance, but never do they seem timid in His presence, or ashamed to let Him see how shallow and hard of understanding they are. Yet He is never petulant with them. Even though He should chide them for their dullness, His rebukes are not harsh.

Thus, when Philip says to Him, “Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us,” Jesus answers him with a question which quietly rebukes his simplicity, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?” What lenience, what compassion! “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.” Oh! how should the children of such a father cling to his knees, sit at his feet, hang on his lips, and pour out their hearts before him!

Such, beloved, was the demeanor that Jesus loved to exhibit towards His disciples, and such was the behavior that He liked to encourage on their part towards Himself. As there were no chills in that friendliness of His, so there could hardly be much shyness or backwardness in those communings of theirs. I linger on the picture. He, on whose brow majestic sweetness reigns, is all generous, condescending, and I might almost say, He is affable, while they, poor in spirit, weak in faith, grow open and ingenuous, confidential, and confiding in His society.

Language fails me to describe to you what I see in the text and its surroundings. Here is the Man Christ Jesus, divine in His person, in His character, and in His conduct, unveiling the Father to babes in grace, who do not and cannot understand the charm that first drew them and then bound them to Him. But He who once sojourned here below, now sits exalted high on the right hand of God. In bodily presence He is not among us, He is not to be seen by mortal eyes, yet in spirit He abides with us, and His presence is known and felt by gracious hearts.

Believe me, then, He is the same Jesus, He is by no means changed. The terms on which He would have us live with Him and walk with Him are far above mere service. He calls us “friends.” Why, think you? Is it because we have done so much for Him? Nay, it is because He has done so much for us, and told us so much, and kept nothing back from us. In truth, He is our friend and counsellor, and He would have us come to Him and ask His advice in the most frank and simple manner.

When we feel that we lack wisdom, He never upbraids us, but He always gives liberally to those who ask Him. We may play the child with Him. He deigns to be pleased with our childish prattle. Our

prayers may be full of inquiries, our supplications may be laden with difficulties that we cannot unravel, yet He will condescend to explain them all, and by His Spirit He will continue to teach and lead us further into truth. Oh! how I wish we always cultivated this childlike spirit towards Jesus, for He always has a compassionate spirit towards us.

What dull scholars we all are! “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?” These words suggest two redactions, on each of which I shall have a few remarks to offer. First, *notwithstanding the highest privileges that can be enjoyed in obtaining instruction, we may yet remain ignorant of Jesus Christ*, and secondly, *when we do know Him the most favored disciples have still much to learn*.

So far as our religious training is concerned—

I. THE BEST OF MEN CANNOT IMPART TO US A KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

Here were apostles who had been with Jesus Himself for three years in His public labors and in His private retirement. They had been, as it were, students in His college, He Himself had been their tutor. They could not surely have been placed in more advantageous circumstances. No better tutor could have been found. He taught them both by His works and by His words. He was constantly doing miracles and performing wondrous actions, by which He showed His glory and revealed His nature.

But there were some of them that, after all this teaching, did not know—did not know what? Why, they did not know Him, they did not know the main point of all His teaching, they did not know the Teacher Himself. He had been so long time with them, and yet they did not know Him. I am not now, in this first part of our discourse, alluding so much to Philip, whose knowledge was imperfect, his light but a glimmer, and his thoughts, therefore, often perplexed, as I am to Judas Iscariot. The career of that unhappy man, his calling, his course, his character, his conduct, his crime, and the consequences of his crime, all conspire to produce a picture on which we gaze with wild amazement, and as we ponder it we feel a sinking at the inmost heart.

It shows us how near a man may be to Christ in the daily walks of life, how much he may see of Christ in His works of mercy toward the children of men, and how often he may hear of Christ the words of counsel and comfort, of wisdom and warning, and yet be totally ignorant of Christ, deriving no virtue from Him, entering into no sympathy with Him, till at length he falls away to perish with an awful, terrible destruction.

Or to make the peril more thoroughly our own, it would appear that we might associate with the followers of Christ in our homes, have constantly before our eyes the charities which are dispensed in the name of Christ, and be privileged to listen stately to the most enlightened and eloquent preachers of Christ, and yet never discern Him as the Son of God, sent of the Father, the very essence and quintessence of the covenant of Grace. His name may be most familiar to our ears, while, alas! our hearts are alien to Him.

Had Judas known his Master more truly, could he have dealt by Him so treacherously? Had he known Christ to be one with the Father, would he have sold Him for thirty pieces of silver? Had he known Him to be “God, over all, blessed for ever,” would he have betrayed Him to the chief priests? Oh! no, though he had seen Him tread the sea, and heard the voice that called back Lazarus from the tomb, yet Judas saw only the man, the Nazarene, whom he could sell and give over traitorously to His foes. Certainly he did not so know Jesus as to trust Him, he had never yielded up his soul to rely upon the Messiah, the Christ, the appointed, the anointed Savior.

Judas was pre-eminently one who, though he had been a long time with Christ, yet knew Him not in the matter of saving faith. And I am sure he did not know Him so as to love Him. If he had loved Him, he would not have deceived Him, or given Him the traitorous kiss. Learn then from his example, rather than from Philip’s, just now, that you and I may have been hearers of the Word for years, and yet may not know Jesus.

Oh! but if we do know Him, let us be very grateful that the Holy Spirit hath taught us something of His sacred mission. How much more, if you have been made acquainted with the dignity and excellence

of His Person, and confessed Him to be the Son of God!—what thanks will ye then render unto the Father? Remember what Christ said to Simon Peter when He proved that he knew Him beyond all the rumors that were floating about, beyond all the opinions that were entertained, beyond all the prejudices that were nursed among the rulers or the people of those days. He said, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”

No minister can make us know Christ, no book, no, not even the Bible itself, apart from this celestial teaching. So Paul prays “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.” This will make Jesus Christ in the Deity of His Person, in the excellency of His work, in the love of His heart, in the faithfulness of His character, to be truly known by us, so that we shall trust Him implicitly, and love Him undividedly.

I do beg to press this very earnestly upon many of you here present. The question of our text has a strong admonition, when set in this light, for some of you. Has not Jesus been, as it were, a long time with you, you who are regular attendants at this place of worship? Ah! ye have discerned His presence by the words spoken and the signs wrought in your midst. When we have preached the Gospel earnestly and faithfully, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, as at least we sometimes have preached it, then Jesus has come very near to you, often and often has He pleaded with you, you have felt a presence greater than that of man while His truth has been declared.

“Has He been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Him?” That He has been with you is certain, for His saints bear witness of Him. While you have been sitting on these seats, there have been all around you gracious hearts that have rejoiced because they have seen the Savior, sorrowing hearts that have been relieved of many cares, and weeping eyes whose tears have been wiped away. The presence of Jesus has made the heart-strings of many here to sound like harps for joy.

Has He been so long time with you, nigh unto you, seen by your neighbors, and yet hast thou not known Him? Oh! poor souls! poor Philip, poor John, poor Mary, that could sit in such an assembly where others saw the Savior, and yet not to have known Him! Moreover, Jesus has been here, for many like you have seen Him. Perhaps your own wife has been converted, your brother has seen the Lord, your sister has come to know Christ as her Savior, and so long has He been with you that now you could count some dozen or more of your companions that have come to know Jesus, yet you have not known Him.

Oh! it is hard to live where grace is distributed freely, and yet have none of it yourself. Where there is a general famine, as there lately was in the city of Paris, each man bears the stress with some patience, the more so because others are in a like plight. But oh! to starve in this city, when you see others feasting on plenty! Oh! this is sad, sad work! And some of you are being lost, while others are being saved, the very Sabbaths when others find Jesus see you go away without a thought of Him, the sermon which pierces others’ hearts glides past you, the exhortation which points others to Calvary, you hear, but never heed. You are still a stranger to Him, though He has come so very near you. And has it been so long that He has been with you, and yet, and yet, have you not known Him! Oh! this is grievous.

“So long,” the Savior says, have I been so long time—*so long*? I must linger just one minute on that word. To be a day or even an hour an unbeliever after you have heard the Gospel is a very long time. A day! what does it mean? “Only a day,” you will sometimes say, at another time you say, “a whole day,” with a prolonged emphasis. You know time must often be measured by the condition in which a man is placed. To be beneath a lion’s claw, or with one’s arm in a lion’s mouth five minutes, is a great deal too long. It is a dreadful condition to have life in jeopardy, and to be so long in fear.

I have heard of one who fell down a deep crevice upon a glacier—between the deep blue ice. If you look down and throw a stone, it is long before you hear the sound, showing that the stone has reached the bottom. A traveler once slid down one by accident, and there he lay wedged in by the ice. I think it was fully an hour before the ropes were brought. Why, that must have seemed a dreadful while to wait.

An hour, you know, in good society, cheerfully spent, seems short, but an hour between the jaws of death, how dreadful!

Now, an unbeliever is in as great danger as that, and even in greater danger, he is under God's anger every minute that he is an unbeliever. It is a long time to be in jeopardy of your soul, along time to be under the sentence of death, a very long time to be without hope. Ah! but *hours* did I speak of? *months* did I speak of? *Years* rather must I come to, for it has been many years with some of you. You remember your mother's pleadings, the Sunday school teacher's entreaties, and now the grey hairs begin to appear here and there upon you, and you are unsaved still.

"Have I been so *long* time with you?" Perhaps you don't think it long, but it is long to God. You know if you have a child that has been very, very disobedient, and you say to him, "Now do as I tell you," he waits in stubborn silence. Some minutes afterwards you say, "My child, I must be obeyed, do it." Still he looks angry and sullen and bites his lips. It is a long time for you to wait, you feel you must chastise him soon. Oh! what a long time it has been for God to be waiting!

There are some men whom you cannot provoke for a minute without rousing their temper and exciting their resentment. Who among us could stand such provocation, say, for an hour? I am afraid the best tempered man here, if incessantly provoked from morning to night for a week, would find that it needed much more grace than he had in stock to keep him from anger. But for forty years to provoke the Lord to anger! Marvel not that He was grieved, aye, and aggrieved with that generation.

"Have I been so long time with you?" Has Christ been so long in your midst? Have His words sounded in your ears? Have you seen His deeds of mercy in blessing others? And yet all this while, for so long time with you, and you would not know Him, you have not desired to trust Him, but you have bid Him go His way to wait your convenience. When you have a more convenient season, you intend to send for Him. Take care lest that convenient season come not until the harvest is past and the summer is ended, and the day of grace is over with you. Oh! may the question ring an alarm in your conscience. I commend it to your earnest attention, all of you who are unsaved.

And now I propose to address a few thoughts to the people of God. Beloved friends, by the teaching of God's Spirit we do know the Savior, of a truth we know the Son of Man to be one with the Father. We have been taught to discern in the face of Jesus of Nazareth the express image of God. We love Him, we reverence Him, we adore Him as our God, the Redeemer of our souls. We have much joy and much peace in believing and worshipping.

Now, with all this knowledge, it is very possible—nay, I think it is quite certain—that—

II. ALL OF US HAVE A GREAT DEAL MORE TO LEARN.

Here and there, at many a turn, our vision is so clouded, our faith so weak, our memory so treacherous, Jesus might say to each of us, as He said to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" *We are slow to acquaint ourselves with our Lord and Master*, though He is with us. This is all the more strange, because, if a man lives with you, you pretty soon think you know him. You who have long held communion and kept company, as it were, with Jesus, ought to have known Him better than you do. Some men you cannot know, because they are so changeable. You think you know them today, yet are they very different tomorrow, but "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and for ever."

I remember some twelve or fifteen years ago I was asked—very earnestly asked—by a painter to sit for my portrait. I did sit some ten or twelve times, and at the end of each sitting, when I looked at what he had done, I thought the picture less like me than it had been before. He seemed to be much of the same opinion, though he was an eminent and skilled artist. At last he dashed his brush across the canvass and gave up his task in despair. When I asked him why, he said, "I never see your face twice alike, it is quite impossible for me to paint you."

No such complaint can be made of our Lord's character. Or at least, though a thousand fresh beauties rise to our view as we gaze on His lovely face, and though the majesty and the meekness that blend in Him surpass all power of delineation, yet He is evermore Jesus the same, ever lovely, ever kind

and true, ever gracious, therefore, by resorting to Him and consorting with Him, we ought more and more to know Him.

Some people, it is true, you cannot know; they are so retiring and reserved. However long you live with them, you cannot make their acquaintance. They practice so much restraint, curbing their feelings, hiding their thoughts, and sparing their words that you see not themselves—they show you not what they are, but what they would appear. Whether it be because they are proud, or because they are timid, from self-esteem or from diffidence, they veil the features of their mind, and it is only on some remarkable occasion, through a sudden grief or an unexpected joy, that they look, and act, and speak with perfect freedom and natural simplicity.

Not so our Savior, He reveals Himself with open face, He wears His heart upon His sleeve, He is frank and ingenuous with His people. “If it were not so, I would have told you,” He said to His disciples, as if He could appeal to them, and their conscience could witness that He had kept back no secrets from them, that between Him and them there was no reticence, that all He had they should have, and all He left they should be privy to. How ought we then to know Christ, since He is neither changeable nor reserved, and yet, brethren, to how limited an extent do we know Him.

In various particulars *our ignorance, or rather our want of perception, is palpable*. Some of the true servants of our Lord—perhaps there are such here present—do not know the very alphabet of His teaching, they discern not the great doctrines of the Gospel so as to rejoice in them. Does Jesus say, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you,” and again, “I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit”? they start back affrighted at the doctrine of election, and shudder at the very sound of a predestinating purpose.

Or does He say, “I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish”? they are shocked at the doctrine of final perseverance, and bleat out their cries of distress as though they thought that nothing could be more unsafe than security—timorous creatures! I do not think this lack of sagacity is so much their fault as their misfortune. They were taught, when they were young, to be afraid of these doctrines, then they turned a deaf ear to them, and now they have got old, they are rather perplexed than comforted by them.

Understand me, my dear brother, Jesus Christ loved you, and He tells you the Father Himself loved you before the foundation of the world. He did not begin to love you after you loved Him. Is that a new truth to you? That is the doctrine of election. You have been denying it, you thought it was a horrible and dangerous presumption. Have you known Christ so long and not found that out yet?

Now, here is another doctrine. Jesus Christ always will love you. Whom once He loves He never leaves, but loves them to the end. That is the doctrine of final perseverance. You have been afraid of that, have not you? Well, but have you known Christ and not found that out? Do you think He can change? Do you believe that He will make you a member of His body and cut you off? Do you imagine that He will die for you and then let you perish? “If, when you were an enemy, you were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, you shall be saved through his life.”

My dear brethren, I will not controvert that point with you, but I do believe that if you knew Jesus Christ better, you would think differently, for any man who supposes that Christ did not love His people before the world began, or that He will not love them when the world has ceased to be, may well hear Jesus say, “Have, I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, my friend Arminius? Hast thou not found me out yet, so as to know that I am God, that I change not, and therefore, the sons of Jacob are not consumed?”

But some of His saints *do not know their Lord in the tenderness of His heart*, and the richness of His forgiving mercy. Perhaps there is a believer here who has fallen into some great sin. My brother, my sister, I am grieved enough to hear it, and I trust your grief is more than you can express. If like David, you have gone astray and done evil in the sight of heaven, then I hope, like David, you will feel broken bones, and have David’s penitence to go to God again for fresh forgiveness.

After making a profession by faith, you have fallen into sin and sunk into despondency. Jesus Christ appears to you, and He says, “Soul, hast thou sinned after coming to me? Hast thou sinned and brought my name into dishonor? I am ready still to forgive thee. Come and put thy trust again in Me, and thy transgression shall be blotted out.” Doubt whispers, “Lord, I cannot see how thou canst forgive this.” “Why,” He would say, “have I been so long time with you, and yet dost thou not know me? When did I ever refuse to forgive one of my servants? Did not Peter deny me, aye, with oaths and cursing? and what did I do to Peter? Did I say, Peter shall never be my servant again? No, I did but look at him, and that broke his heart, and afterwards I said to him, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? That is all I said that looked like chastisement, and I forgave him, and made him my disciple.”

Oh! child of God, stained with sin, if thou sayest, “Christ cannot wash me again clean,” then thou hast been a long time with Him, and thou hast not known Him. Or again, into what a morbid state our minds will sometimes sink. The other day I was in this plight, and perhaps you may be in the same, full of wandering thoughts. I could not read a chapter with any sort of understanding. After going through two or three verses, I felt that I might as well have been reading *Virgil*. I tried to pray, oh! such prayers!—a few words, and then it was as if I was not praying at all. So I thought within myself, “Can the Lord accept me, a poor, weak, worthless soul as I am? I cannot control my thoughts.”

Then came headache and pain, till I was worse still, and I began to question how I could be accepted of God in my devotion when it was all dull and languid, without fire or fervor. But afterwards I bethought myself thus—If my dear child had been told to do a thing, and he was sick and ill, and did his best, I know I should not blame him, I should say, “Poor soul, I see he would do it better if he could,” and can I imagine that my Lord, when He has known me so long, will judge me by the distraction of my mind or the weakness of my body? Ah! but sometimes I have feared He would.

If any of you are harboring such a thought, you may see Him standing by you, and hear Him addressing you in these tender accents, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? Do not you know me well enough to understand that I can interpret your feeblest prayer? Do you think me a harsh tyrant, or a hard taskmaster? Why, I love you, I pity you from my very soul. Do not misjudge Me, I do not misjudge you, I take the will for the deed. I read your groanings, and I bottle up your tears.”

The question may sometimes be driven home to us in another kind of experience. *When called to suffer in mind, in body, or in estate*, it is easy for those who would comfort us to quote that sweet assuring passage of Scripture, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” But it is not half so easy for those who smart under adversity to encourage themselves in the Lord. When racked with many pains, from which you seek in vain for relief, or when you are very poor and straitened in your circumstances—when your cupboard is bare, and you have no work to do—when the children are crying for bread, and you have no wages to receive, then have not you felt, amidst your weighty griefs, how black thoughts will haunt your mind, dark surmises will hover about your imagination, and oh! it might happen in some unguarded moment, that rebellious murmurings would come upon your lips.

“Can this be right? Can God be kind? Hath He forgotten to be gracious? Where now is that all-bountiful providence we were wont to look to? Is this in any way consistent with love?” But hush, my soul, nor dare repine. It is the voice of Jesus which says to you, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? The last time I afflicted you, did not it turn out for your good? You have had sore trials by the way, were they not means of great blessing to you? Don’t you know me yet? Cannot you trust me?”

Here is the bitter medicine, you have taken the like before, and your health has been recruited. You took a draught the other day when the fever was upon you, and it drove it away. Don’t you know enough of the skill of your physician to put yourself in His hands, and take whatsoever He prescribes cheerfully and without demur? Surely, brethren, we should not wince so much at our afflictions if we did but know

the Master better. From the hand of the Lord we should accept them, and we should bow to the will of the Lord in bearing them.

The like may be said to us *when we are called to some new labor*. Preacher, teacher, visitor, may any of them find their labor of love an irksome toil when beset with difficulties and consumed with sorrows. The young minister encountering tastes and tempers that vex his soul, the superintendent of a class striving to instruct children who will not listen, much less learn, the visitor who is repulsed by those she courts, and upbraided by those she strives to befriend—all of these are apt to complain, “Lord, why hast Thou called me to this particular work? In other departments I might have succeeded, this I cannot do. I have neither the ability nor the strength.”

Then, again, might Jesus lay His dear pierced hand on your shoulder and say, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? Did I ever send thee to a warfare at thine own charges? Did I ever give thee work to perform, and leave thee unsupported? Have I not always proved that, “as thy day so shall thy strength be”? Go in this thy might, for I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Do not doubt me, for if thou dost, thou hast not known me.”

The scruple that sometimes comes over God’s children about *praying for little things* is another instance of their not knowing Christ. “Oh!” saith one, “if my child were dying, I could pray about that, but when he is only fretful and hard to manage, though it does worry me a good deal, and sorely grieves my spirit, yet I cannot go and lay such a trivial matter before my great Lord.” Then you don’t know Him. “Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip?”

Has not the Lord said that He counts the hairs of our head, and that not a sparrow alighteth to the ground without His decree? Your Savior is as great in His attention to tiny wants as in His administration of grand affairs. Take the thorn in your finger to Christ, take the stone in the shoe to Christ. I mean, pilgrim, if you get a little care that may fester and breed great pain, take that to Christ. I mean, pilgrim, if thou hast a little trial on thy way to heaven, take that to Christ, or else thou shalt do amiss. Thou knowest Him not if thou canst not trust Him with anything and everything, whatever it may be that relates to thy welfare.

Now I shall give you two more instances, which show how we may be with Christ, and yet may not have known Him as we should. One shall be this. Every now and then I hear Christians saying—(I am glad to hear it)—“I offered prayer on such and such an account, and God has graciously heard me.” I am pleased to hear them make *the confession of answered prayer*, for it tends to cheer and encourage others. But when they go on to exclaim, “Is it not surprising? Does not it seem almost incredible? Is it not marvellous?”

I think they betray a weakness. Have not I heard many speak of Mr. Muller’s orphan houses at Bristol, and the honor put on him as extraordinary. It seems as though they thought it unaccountable that God should hear that dear man’s prayers! “More than two thousand children supported by prayer and faith,” they said—“How wonderful!” as if our Lord in this had exceeded His own promise. Well, but has Christ, been so long time with us that we think these things strange?

Were I to hear it reported that such a man, after having been married twenty years, had taken his wife home a present, which he had handed to her very kindly and very generously, but which she had accepted with a look of surprise, and an exclamation of “Who would have thought it?” I should say, “Ah! then, they have lived a rather sorry life together, or else, though she might have been delighted, she certainly would not have been astounded at her husband’s generosity to her.

Or again, if I heard that a certain individual had paid his debts, and if it was talked of down Cheapside and all over London, I should naturally infer that it was a great wonder he did so, that on his part it was a thing uncommon, and on the part of his creditors a thing unexpected. So too, when I hear it spoken of as passing strange, a prodigy, that God should be gracious to His people, I blush for those who are amazed at what they might have expected. Am I to understand it to be really surprising that the Faithful Promiser keeps His promise, that our heavenly Father bestows good things on His children, that

He who encouraged us to ask, and engaged Himself to give, should answer our petitions? I dare not think thus.

It seems to me that your sudden surprises tell of evil surmises. I would rather say, with that good old Christian lady who, when she was told of God's hearing prayer, and asked if it was not surprising, replied, "No, it is just like Him, it is His way, He is always doing it." Ah! truly, when we express surprise at His answering prayer and delivering His servants according to His promise, He might well say, "What, have I been so long time with you, and have not you known me?"

With one more instance I conclude. Full many a time I have heard the Master's voice in the inner chambers of my heart, expostulating with me thus—Have I been so long time with thee, and hast thou not known Me? And then I have said, Alas! Lord, I have not known Thee as I should, and I feel that I cannot know Thee as I would. Come, beloved, let us talk it over together. Sometimes, in deep quietude of spirit, our heart has been giving itself to devotion, it may have been a time of suffering. The world was all shut out, and sweetly did our soul begin to perceive the love and the loveliness of Christ, till the vision of the Savior grew clearer and brighter, and more brilliant still.

We saw His Godhead, admired His condescension, that He should stoop to redeem, we saw His manhood, grateful that He should come so near to us as to be bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. We saw Him at Gethsemane—seemed to count the bloody drops as they fell in a sweat from His brow. We saw Him on the cross, marked His hands and feet. Our soul could fain follow Him up to heaven, there view Him on the right hand of the throne of God, pleading. We drew nigh unto Him, He wrapped us in His crimson vest, and told us all His name."

Then we felt we knew more in that hour than we had ever known before, so that all we had known seemed nothing. We said to our soul, "Have we been so long time with Him, and yet have we not known Him till this hour as we know Him now?"

Now, between here and heaven, unless we go home very shortly, there will come a good many of these openings of the golden gates, times in which the King will bring us to His banqueting house. Doubtless, each time will He reveal Himself more intimately when we look more fully at Him, and discover more of His blessed features and His sacred mind—each time we shall rise up from the sacred festival and say, "Long time as I have been with Him, I have not known Him hitherto." On every fresh occasion we shall be ready to exclaim, like to the Queen of Sheba, when she saw the glory of Solomon, "The half has not been told me."

And when you get face to face with Him, your admiration will become so intense that, though you will have a grateful remembrance of all you did know of Him on earth, you will say, "I was a long time with Him; twenty, thirty, forty years, but I did not then know Him as I know Him now. I had a little fellowship with Him in the vale of tears below, but oh! I did but paint a blear-eyed picture of the lovely King. Mine was but a poor dreamy, smoky imagination of this bright Sun, this Sun of Righteousness in His glory, my King, the chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely."

I pray, brethren, that, gathering round His table, you may have just such a season as shall make you ashamed of what you have known before in comparison with what you see now of His beauty. And then may you go on further and further learning of Christ, making discoveries of His glory till you shall be with Him where he, is, to behold that glory, and to be participators in it. God bless you at this feast of His love. May He be present with us to make glad our hearts! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

REVELATION 19:11-16

Verses 11-13. *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of*

fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

That same Logos of whom John wrote in the Gospel now stands before him, and he beholds him in his glory. That a delight it must have been to the seer of Patmos to see his Lord and Master once again in different array from that in which he had beheld Him when, in humiliation, He tabernacled here among the sons of men! His name is still the same—the Logos—the Word of God.

14-16. *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

And this is the man of Nazareth. This is the crucified, despised, and rejected once. *Servus servorum* once—Servant of servants, but now King of kings and Lord of lords. And what will the end be of the battle that He wages? Will any of His adversaries escape? Will they hold their own? No, they shall utterly be destroyed before Him. All the powers of evil of false doctrine—everything contrary to His mind—shall be destroyed. And this is set forth in symbolic imagery by the dreadful battle feast which usually succeeds a battle, when the vultures smell the carrion from afar and come to rend the spoil. It shall not be thus with the bodies of men, but thus with evil—thus with the powers of darkness.

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